



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS

2 NAVY ANNEX

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20370-5100

TJR

Docket No: 3410-00

9 November 2000

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

This is in reference to your application for correction of your naval record pursuant to the provisions of Title 10, United States Code, Section 1552.

A three-member panel of the Board for Correction of Naval Records, sitting in executive session, considered your application on 7 November 2000. Your allegations of error and injustice were reviewed in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures applicable to the proceedings of this Board. Documentary material considered by the Board consisted of your application, together with all material submitted in support thereof, your naval record, and applicable statutes, regulations, and policies.

After careful and conscientious consideration of the entire record, the Board found the evidence submitted was insufficient to establish the existence of probable material error or injustice.

The Board found you enlisted in the Marine Corps on 21 March 1977 at the age of 19. Your record reflects that shortly thereafter, on 8 April 1977 you began a 31 day period of unauthorized absence (UA) that was not terminated until 4 October 1977. The following day, on 5 October 1977, you began a 381 day period of UA that was not terminated until 19 October 1978. Subsequently, you submitted a written request for an undesirable discharge in order to avoid trial by court-martial for these periods of UA totalling 412 days. Your record reflects that prior to submitting this request for discharge, you conferred with a qualified military lawyer at which time you were advised of your rights and warned of the probable adverse consequences of accepting such a discharge. Your request was granted and your commanding officer was directed to issue you an other than honorable discharge by reason of the good of the service. As a result of this action, you were spared the stigma of a court-martial conviction and the potential penalties of a punitive discharge and confinement at hard labor. On 15 December 1978 you were so discharged.

The Board, in its review of your entire record and application, carefully considered all mitigating factors, such as your youth and immaturity and your contention that you would like an upgrade of your discharge so that you may be treated at a veteran's hospital. The Board further considered your contention that you went UA to provide assistance at home. However, the Board found the evidence and materials submitted were not sufficient to warrant recharacterization of your discharge given your frequent and lengthy periods of UA, and your request for discharge to avoid trial. The Board believed that considerable clemency was extended to you when your request for an undesirable discharge was approved since, by this action, you escaped the possibility of confinement at hard labor and a punitive discharge. The Board noted that there is no evidence in your record, and you submitted none, to support your contentions. Further, the Board concluded that you received the benefit of your bargain with the Marine Corps when your request for a clemency discharge was granted and should not be permitted to change your discharge now. Accordingly, your application has been denied.

The names and votes of the members of the panel will be furnished upon request.

It is regretted that the circumstances of your case are such that favorable action cannot be taken. You are entitled to have the Board reconsider its decision upon submission of new and material evidence or other matter not previously considered by the Board. In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that a presumption of regularity attaches to all official records. Consequently, when applying for a correction of an official naval record, the burden is on the applicant to demonstrate the existence of probable material error or injustice.

Sincerely,

W. DEAN PFEIFFER  
Executive Director